

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS KATHMANDU 000529

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

LONDON FOR POL/RIEDEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: MAOISTS AMBUSH VIP SECURITY DETAIL ON MAJOR HIGHWAY

REF: KATHMANDU 509

1. (SBU) Maoists ambushed a police security team in Sindupalchowk district March 13, killing six officers and seriously injuring six others, police sources confirmed. Press reports state that the insurgents electronically detonated explosives laid in the road. The attack occurred on the Arniko Highway - the main route to the Tibet border - about 55 kilometers east of Kathmandu. The 22-member police team was on its way to meet and escort Parliament Speaker Taranath Ranabhat and State Minister for Health Mohan Basnet, who were to travel from the capital to a program at a high school in Bahrabise. The two cancelled their trip on learning of the ambush.

2. (SBU) This is the second attack in four days on police detailed to guard high-ranking Nepalese officials. The detail attacked March 9 (Reftel) had just completed a VIP security assignment.

3. (SBU) Comment: The insurgents' recent guerrilla actions are becoming both more frequent and more daring. Both the March 9 and 13 ambushes took place in broad daylight. In each case, however, the police appear to have been targets of opportunity; the VIPs were not in the area at the time. Maoists have attacked high-level government figures in the past; a February 3, 2001 attack on the Chief Justice's convoy killed six. End Comment.

MALINOWSKI